

shot-Wounds," contains sections on "Sword and Bayonet Wounds," and "Arrow Wounds." Fractures and dislocations are described under "Fractures."

The work is well printed and handsomely illustrated, and promises to be a valuable addition to the world's systematically-compiled surgical literature, and an aid to the student, practitioner, and teacher. The names of the men who are to make the three succeeding volumes guarantee that the work will be one that shall redound to the credit and honor of American surgery.

JAMES P. WARBASSE.

MEDICAL GYNÆCOLOGY: A Treatise on the Diseases of Women from the Stand-Point of the Physician. By ALEXANDER J. C. SKENE, M.D. 8vo, pp. 530. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1895.

A more accurate description of the scope of this book by Professor Skene would be "A Treatise on such Diseases of Women as can be relieved by the Use of Medicine and Hygiene Alone."

It may be considered as a supplement to the larger work of the same author on "The Diseases of Women," published in 1889. Its composition has been prompted by a desire on the part of its author to present a conservative and judicial estimate of the extent to which purely medical and hygienic measures may be relied upon for the relief of the class of diseases treated of. Certainly no one could be better fitted for such a task than the eminent teacher and successful practitioner who has undertaken it, and whose methods of thought and of work had been established, and the foundation of his well-earned reputation laid before the newer pathology in the disease of the female pelvic organs and its more radical and exclusively surgical methods of treatment had gained much vogue. As the years have passed he has welcomed whatever proved itself to be of value in the new, while he has held fast to that which was good in the old. The present volume, therefore, ought to have special value in coming

from such a source, representing the mature views of one of the senior workers in his chosen field, who has ever striven to hold a proper balance between conservatism and radicalism.

The first 200 pages of the book are devoted to topics that belong without question to the physician and the medical philosopher. They include such matters as differentiation of sex, including the hygiene and education of the growing girl, menstruation and its derangements, sexual characteristics, woman's function in life, therapeutic agents employed in the practice of gynæcology, hygienic and mental therapeutics, and derangements of the sexual function.

Chapter XVII takes up acute inflammatory affections of the pelvic organs, and at once the relative value of surgical and medical treatment engages attention. The author's judgment is expressed as follows: "My own opinion is that, so long as a case of pelvic inflammation is progressing so that there is no apparent danger to the life of the patient, and there are good prospects that recovery will come in time, medical care is most to be relied on; but when suppuration takes place, no matter where, in the pelvis, then surgery comes in to do what medicine cannot do. In cases that do badly, even when there is no certainty of the presence of pelvic abscess but a possible general septicæmia, surgical treatment is called for." "The occurrence of suppuration marks the boundary-line, as a general rule, between those that require medical treatment only and those that require both medical and surgical care. An exception to this rule is met when the damage done by the products of inflammation—such as adhesions—affects the functions of the pelvic organs so that the life of the patient is in danger or renders her helpless and useless, and medical treatment fails to give relief."

In chronic, non-specific endometritis, general medical treatment and the vaginal douche will suffice for a cure in some cases, but in most cases both medical and surgical treatment is required. Chronic ovaritis and chronic salpingitis (non-suppurative) may yield to prolonged medical treatment.

The treatment of displacements of the uterus belongs mainly to

the surgeon, but recent displacements due to temporary enlargement of the uterus and defects of the uterine ligaments, and cases in which the uterus can be readily made to resume its normal position, are wholly within the province of the physician.

The chapter on diseases of the external genitals seems out of place in this book. The methods of treatment advised are all surgical in their nature, although of a minor order.

Functional diseases, hysteria, and neurasthenia, sex and its relations to insanity, all manifestly belong to medical gynæcology. The chapters devoted to their consideration are among the most valuable in the book. The affections of the mammary glands that the author considers to be within the scope of his work are of minor importance, being certain forms of maldevelopment, neuralgia, deranged secretion, and hyperplasia. Under the name of "areolar hyperplasia" the author describes what with more exact pathology would be more correctly designated as chronic circumscribed mastitis. This is certainly a distinctly surgical affection. The bromide of arsenic and iodide of iron or ammonium advised as an adjuvant to the topical applications mentioned serve only to satisfy the mind of the patient in such cases.

Nothing is said directly of the difficulty of distinguishing between this circumscribed mammary hyperplasia and incipient carcinoma. One is led to infer, however, that such differentiation is not easy from the fact that the author details two cases in which he supposed the disease to be cancer, but in which opinion he was proved later to have been in error. The only distinguishing mark here given is that in time the hyperplasie recover, while the cancers grow worse. The vitally important fact that by waiting for time to sufficiently reveal whether a given tumor in the breast is malignant or not, the possibility of its absolute and total eradication, should it prove to be cancer, may be lost, is not suggested at all. There is no general surgeon who does not often have to lament the evil results of this procrastination. Delay in seeking surgical relief for a tumor in the breast is more often than not under the advice of physicians, for the

discovery by a woman of a hard lump in one of her breasts instantly awakens fear of cancer and sends her to her physician for advice. Were only a small proportion of such lumps the beginning of cancer, it were far better that wherever there was the slightest reason for doubt, extirpation should be at once resorted to, even though many indurations of simple inflammatory nature be unnecessarily removed, than to permit one malignant growth to remain unremoved. With great justice many women, who come too late to the operating-table with breast cancer that has diffused itself beyond the possibility of complete extirpation, reproach the physicians who, while they might have been helped, lulled them into a false security by holding out to them hopes that their trouble was not cancerous, advising delay and medical treatment.

It is to be regretted that in this book, which is sure to be extensively read, this view of the case had not been presented, and its very powerful influence had not been thrown upon the side of the early extirpation of every breast tumor about the nature of which the least doubt should exist.

As to uterine fibromata and cancer of uterus, ovaries, or breast, little in the way of medical treatment is suggested. In the course of the brief chapter devoted to cancer, he makes the new, and, if true, very important statement that at the time of the menopause *lithemic* patients—that is to say, women with renal and hepatic torpor—are predisposed to cancer! Here is a new subject for collective investigation. He says, further, “It is a rare thing to see cancer in an active person who does not carry a superabundance of adipose tissue, and who takes a sufficient amount of muscular exercise, and yet not too much.” Both these statements it would be difficult to substantiate; certainly, it is by no means a rare thing to see cancer in the lean and active, and in those whose kidneys and liver are doing their full work. As yet no one can point out the signs that indicate a predisposition to cancer in a given case, and, certainly, no one can assert that by the taking of certain drugs, or the adoption of a certain regimen, a cancerous tendency has been aborted. And yet this

is the very thing which the types make the author to assert, on page 367, where, after mentioning the use of arsenic, mercury, and iodine in conditions where he believed there was a predisposition to cancer, as well as in cases where cancer had actually appeared, he says, "These are the remedies that at the present time are the most efficacious, and I believe that if persistently continued, and if begun early in the course of the disease, but *more especially if employed where there is an apparent tendency to the disease* [italics ours], they are potential preventives." To this quite positive statement is appended the qualifying phrase, "at any rate, the best there are." With which we fully agree.

As to diseases of the urinary organs, the author states that although the majority of diseases of the urinary organs are of such a nature as to require surgical treatment, still there is a large class of acute and functional diseases in which better results are obtained by medical than by surgical treatment. In the quite full consideration of diseases of the urinary apparatus that follows we do not find any reference to affections of the ureters, and the key to certain otherwise inexplicable and inveterate bladder disturbances which they furnish when once they have been recognized.

The concluding chapters of the book are devoted to the diseases incident to the menopause and to advanced life. Of these the most important, medically, is senile endometritis. Its treatment is largely surgical, but is given in considerable detail because of failure to do justice to this affection in works on surgical gynæcology. Of especial interest is his remark that, "Fibromata of the uterus act as a very important cause of the affection, for, although uterine fibromata frequently disappear after the menopause, the endometritis which accompanies the neoplasm continues, but changes from a catarrhal to a purulent form." Such a remark is of especial significance coming from one who has been considered as claiming a comparative innocuousness for uterine fibromata. It will certainly add another indication to those already accepted by many as justifying an early removal of many uteri that are the subjects of annoying and growing myofibromata.

The book, as a whole, is a most interesting and valuable contribution to literature; its style is clear and simple, almost conversational, and easily calls up to mind the author as he stands before his classes and discusses with them in this same style the peculiarities of the cases he presents to them. The book will, after all, be of more value to the surgeon than to the physician; the latter needs rather to have brought sharply to his attention at times the limitation of his therapeutics and the necessity for the more radical and positive measures of the surgeon; the former will have the horizon of his professional life broadened by reading such a book as this, and to surgeons, especially to those who are tempted to permit the details of their handicraft to hide the general principles of their profession, do we commend a perusal of this book.

L. S. PILCHER.

TO CONTRIBUTORS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

All Contributions for Publication, Books for Review, and Exchanges should be sent to the Editorial Office, 386 Grand Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Remittances for Subscriptions and Advertising and all business communications should be addressed to the

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS,
716 Filbert Street,
Philadelphia, Pa.